Reduction in Import of oil

337. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATU RAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that setting up of more oil refineries in the country would reduce import of oil at high cost and in hard currency; and

(b) If so, what are the Government's plans in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA) : fa) Crude 01! for refinining. over and above dornestic production, needs *to* be import-id and will involve less foreign exchange thin for imports of products.

(b) Efforts are being made to increase the refining capacity by taking u.*p* expansion of existing refineries and by setting up of new grass root refineries both in the Joint Venture and Private Sector in order to reduce imports of products.

Setting up of Grass-root oil Refineries

338. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NA TURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to set up three grass-root Oil Refineries in Eastern, Central and Western Regions as a part of its drive to meet the growing demand for petroleum products; and

(b) if so, what would be the annua! installed capacity of each refinery and exact location of each of them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT, SATISH SHARMA) : (a) and (b) Government has approved the setting rip of three new grass root refineries an joint ventures rach with a capacity of '' MMTPA to be located in Eastern India. Central India and Western India. *This will add 18 Million.* tonnes per annum to the oil refining capacity in the country. The exact locations will be decided by the respective ioint venture companies.

Import of Natural gas from the gulf Countries

339. SHRI RAM NARESH YADAV : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to import natural gas from the gulf countries; and

(b) of so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT SAT'SH SHARMA) : (a) and (b) The project ir. at a conceptual stage and details in this regard have not been worked out.

Offer for Development of Oil and Gas fields

340. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of oil and gas fields offered to private companies for development;

(b) the States in which these are located;

(c) what has been the response so far:

(d) whether it is a fact that there are no takers for oil fields in Assam; and

(e) if so, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA) : (a) 43 oil and gas fields have been offered to private companies for development, either on their own or in *joint venture with ONGC/Oil India* Limited.